

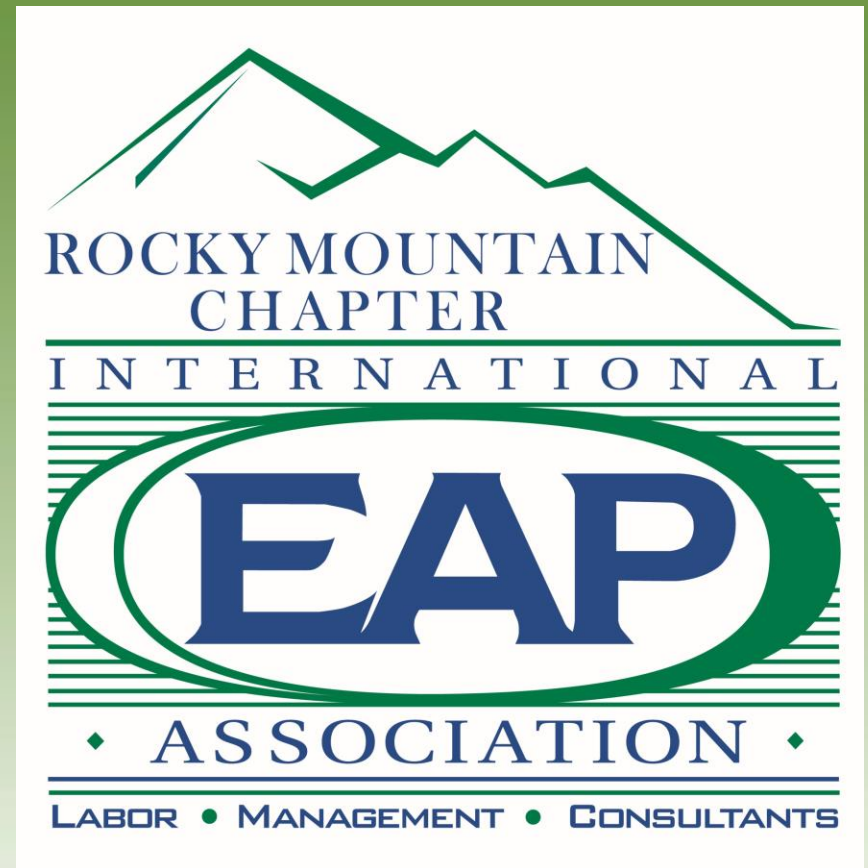
# **Leading Effectively by Managing Change**

Bob Vandepol, LMSW  
Jean Holthaus, LISW, LMSW

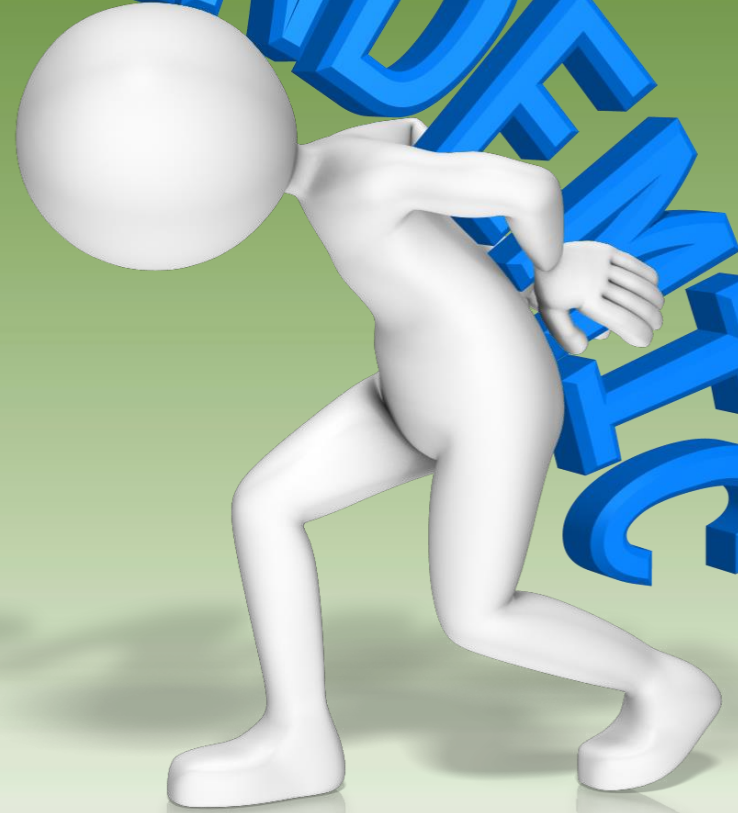


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*Rocky Mountain EAPA does not guarantee the accuracy or reliability of the information provided herein.*



# PANDemics



Anxious about loved ones getting covid

Anxious about getting covid

Pandemic negatively impacting mental health

Increase in Drinking

2021  
2020

1000 adults aged 18 or older conducted March 26 to April 5, 2021 presented at the American Psychiatric Association 2021 Annual Conference



“Military personnel utilize extreme precautions, and there is often an unease when returning to civilian life and shedding the layers of protection they relied on.”



Many people are feeling anxiety about shedding whatever they relied upon to create safety and give them a sense of being protected.

Adam Horwitz, PhD., Assistant  
Professor, University of Michigan

# Discriminatory Behaviors

Informal workplace survey during the Covid-19 outbreak found half of the people felt they have been treated unfairly by co-workers due to fears of spreading the illness.

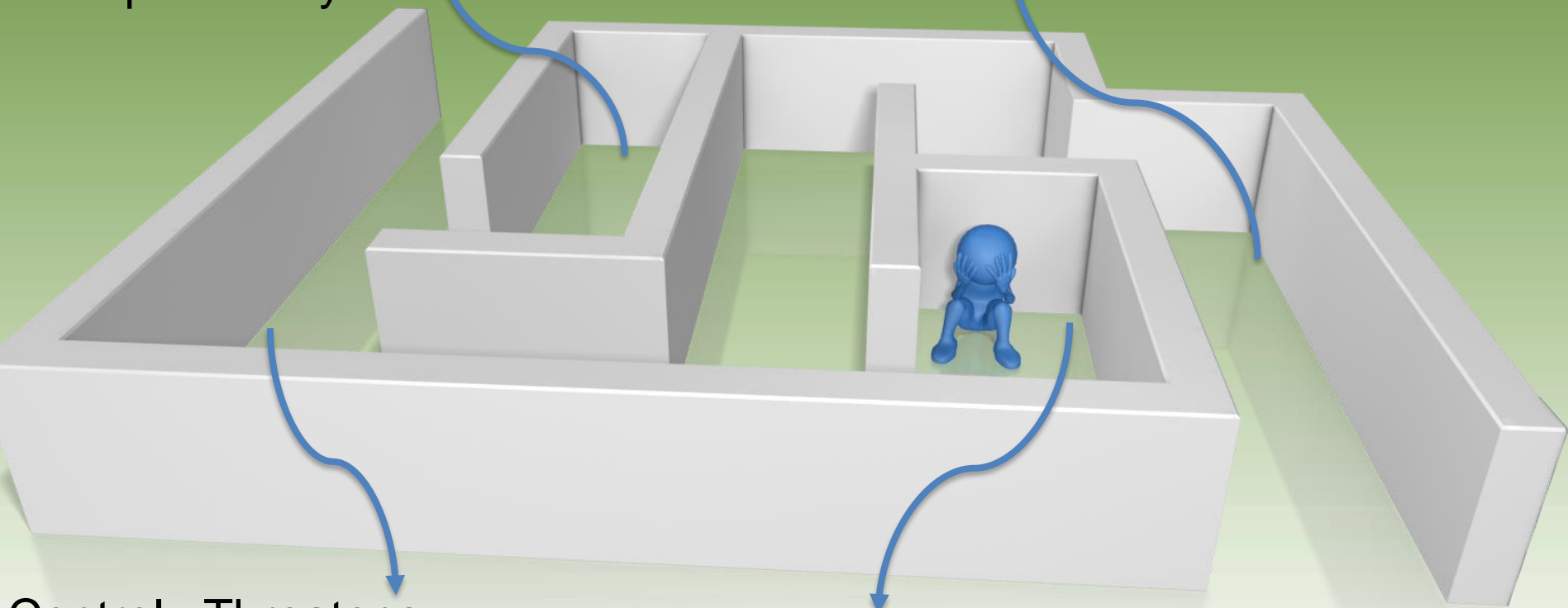
[Protecting.co.uk](http://Protecting.co.uk)



# Sources of Stress

Novelty: Things you haven't experienced previously

Ego Threats: Call competence into question



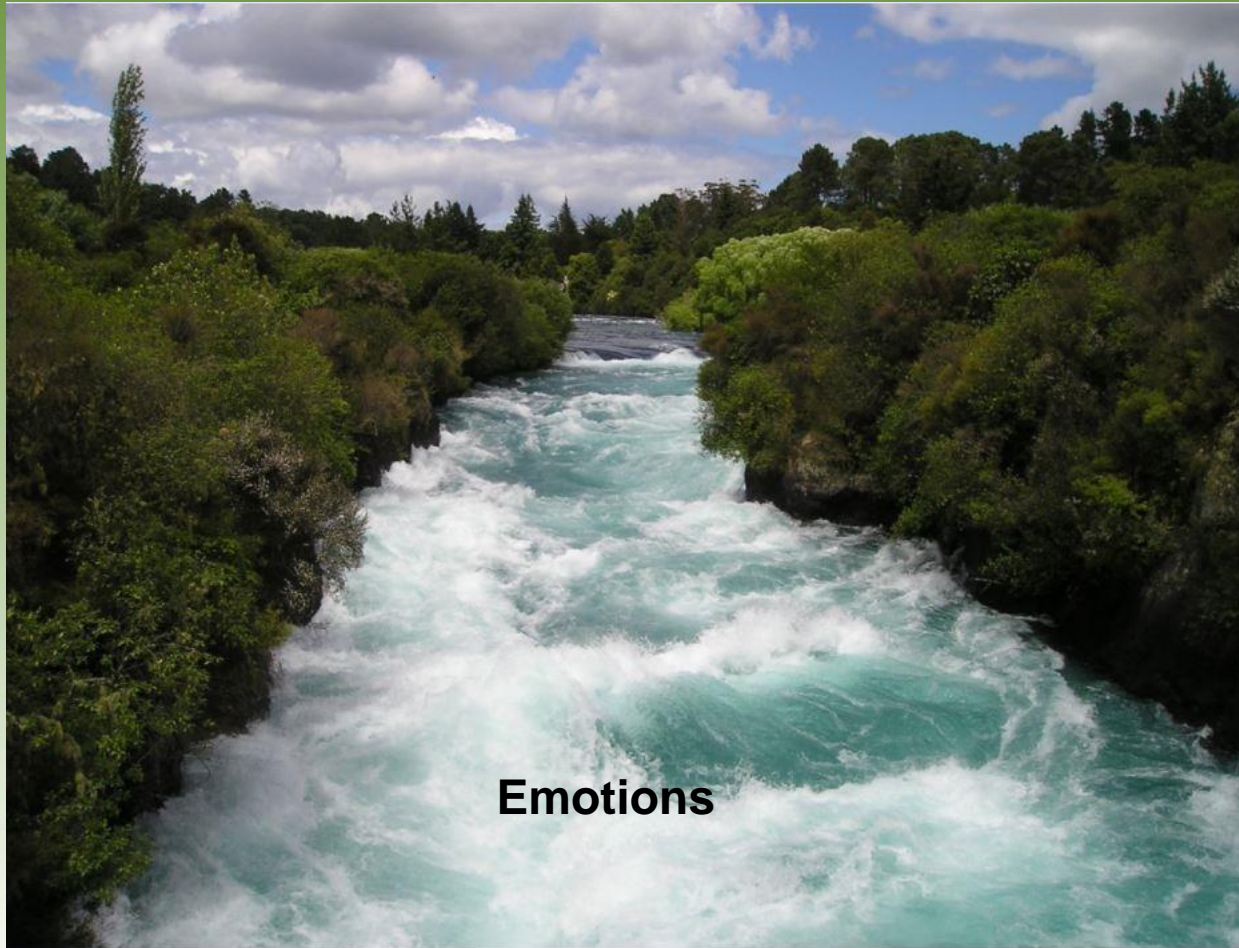
Control: Threatens real/perceived sense of control

Unpredictable: Things you can't anticipate

# Fight, Flight, Freeze

## The Impact of Traumatic Stress

**Rigidity**



**Chaos**

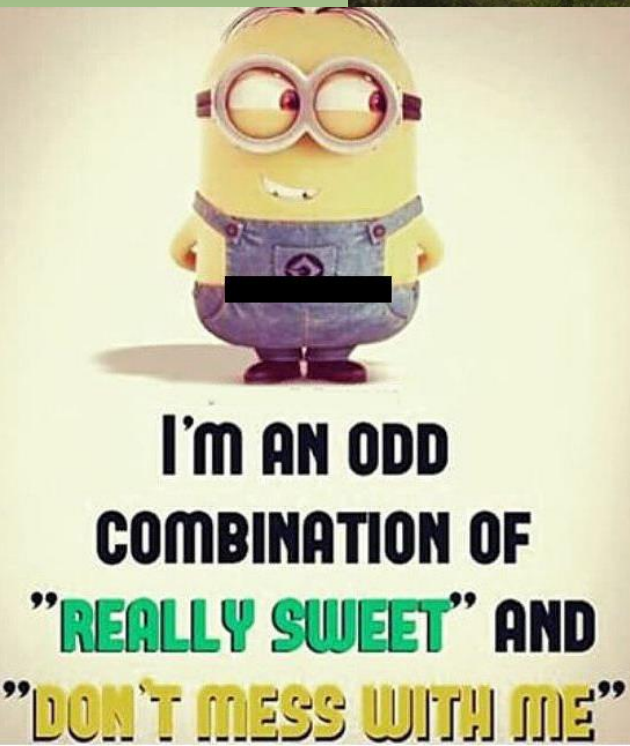
**Emotions**

# When stressed, where do you go and what does it look like?



Rigidity

Chaos

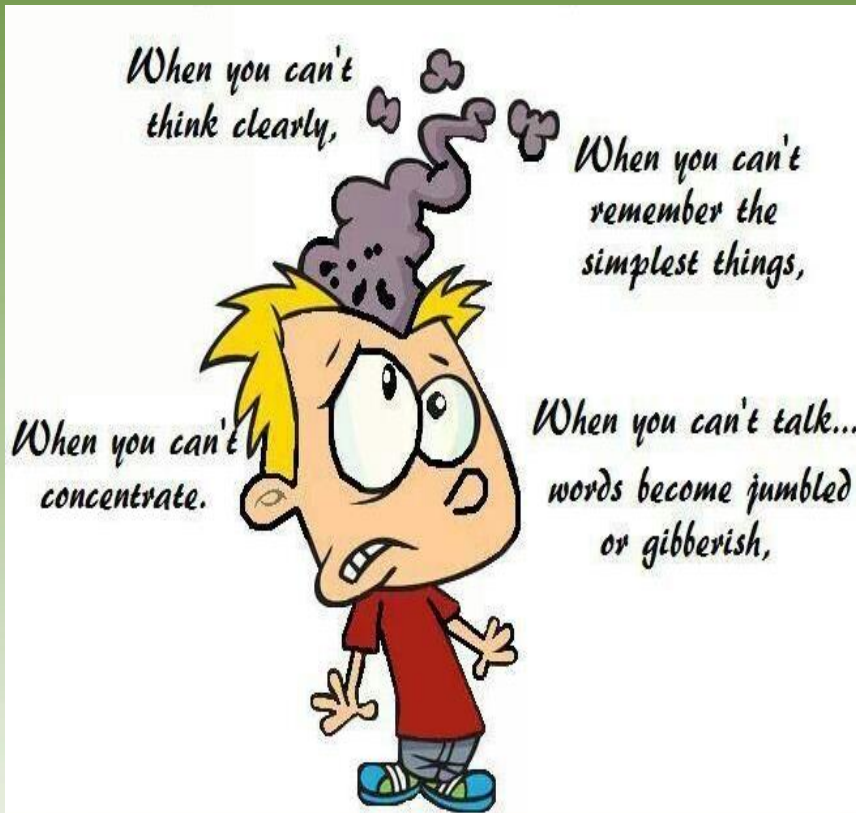


Emotions





# Cognitive Response



- Difficulty with concentration
- Poor judgment
- Linear, emotional, self-protective, black-and-white thinking
- Intrusive thoughts
- Difficulty with multi-tasking
- Dissociation

# Emotional Reactions

- Anxiety or panic attacks
- Irritability
- Tearfulness
- Fear
- Feeling “numb”
- Suicidal or homicidal thoughts/feelings



# Behavioral Reactions



- Pacing
- Avoidance
- Restlessness
- Blaming
- Hyper-vigilance
- Violent Behavior

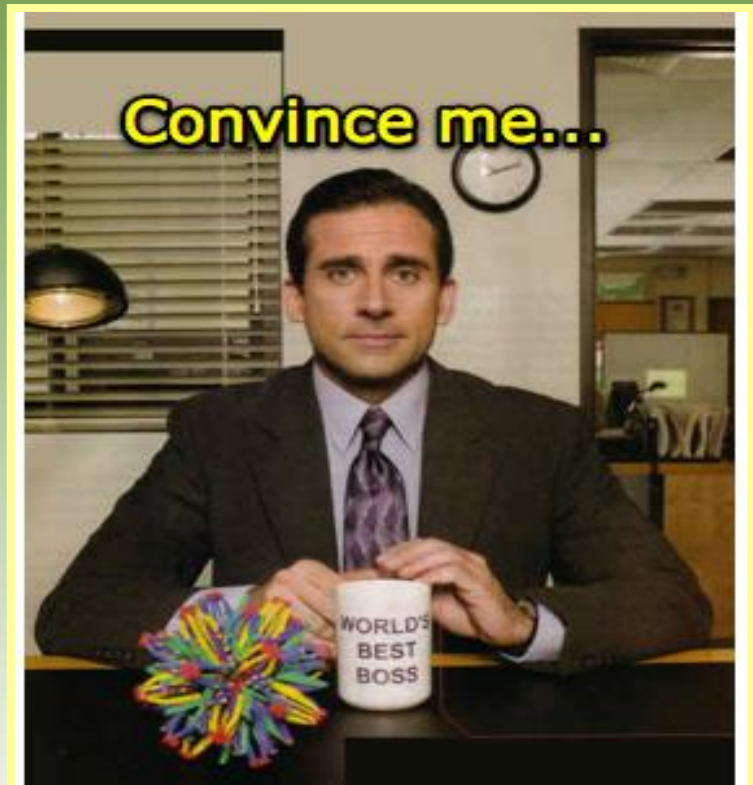
# My View of My Leader and My Community Predict Resilience



- This organization cares about me vs. I'm just a number.
- My leaders know their stuff vs. They're clueless.



- High stress makes you more of what you already were.
- High stress magnifies small weaknesses.
- Strengths over-used can become weaknesses.



# Leadership Sets the Tone



- Accept the Unexpected  
*(Be comfortable being uncomfortable)*
- Believe in Your Strengths
- Assume Recovery through Adaptation

» Maddi and Khoshaba 2005

# A Fragmented Community



# Communication During High Stress





# Empirically-Supported Early Intervention Principles



# Communication Process

## ACT



- Acknowledge and name the issue. Do not duck or minimize it.
- Communicate pertinent information with competence and compassion.
- Transition to immediate concrete, practical next steps.

– Crisis Care Network



When people are upset, it is often not about what it appears to be about. How people are treated when they are upset can be either wounding or healing.

# See Their Point Of View

Changing your perspective  
changes your experience



- Avoid seeing disagreements as insurmountable, permanent problems.
- Be curious about what they see and why they see it.
- Keep things in perspective.

# Non-Verbal Communication



Actions  
speak  
louder  
than  
words

Listen

Be  
present

Take  
time

Think  
about  
how they  
see you

# Non-Verbal Communication



Slow Down

Smile

Calm Tone  
of Voice

Open Body  
Posture

# New Beginnings

New beginnings are carefully designed and begin with an announcement and a schedule:

- We will be working from the office starting XXX

Beginnings need to be nurtured like seedlings:

- Like gardening, beginnings involve getting messy

Leadership frustration that people aren't "on board" misses the fact beginnings must be nurtured.



# Beginnings Spark Ambivalence

While launching a beginning is relieving it also requires people to change so beginnings are scary.

People resist the very beginnings they long for because:

- Beginnings establish with finality that an ending is real
- Beginnings require choosing into something that might not work
- Risks reactive memories of past personal and professional failures
- Beginnings create new accountability and expectations





# Nutrients Essential For Successful Beginnings



# Essential Nutrient: Vision



Vision provides a concrete solution to an identified problem.

- Vision is clearly communicated.
- People understand the personal and corporate consequences if vision is not fulfilled.
- Vision identifies why change is absolutely necessary.

# Essential Nutrient: Vision



What would result if transition occurs without a clear vision?

Type a one-word description of the result in the chat box.

# Essential Nutrient: Vision



Without vision, organizations end up in confusion.

People don't clearly understand why the beginning needs to happen or what will be different.

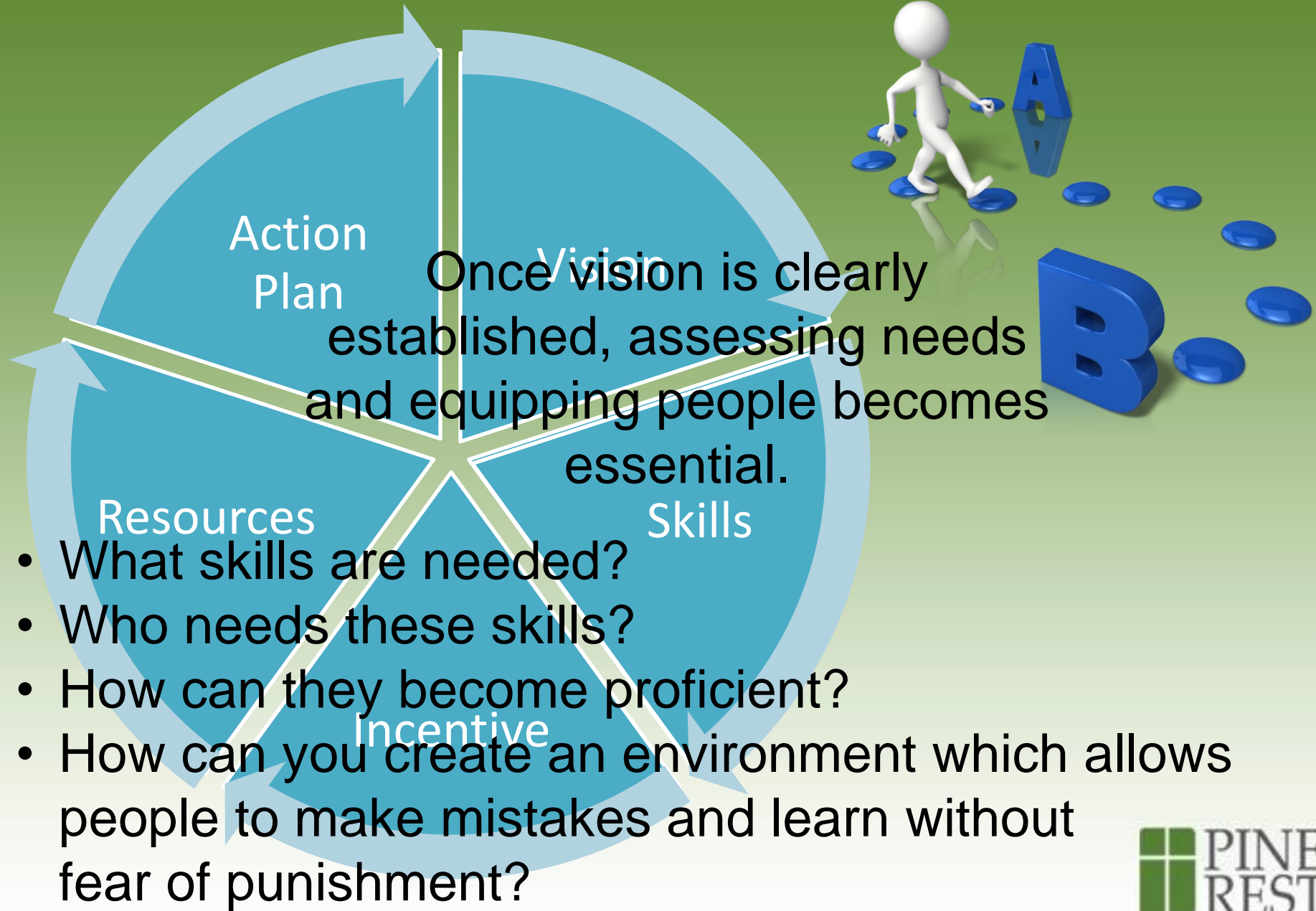
# Essential Nutrient: Vision



Where do you see confusion among those you lead?

How could you clarify vision to help with this?

# Essential Nutrient: Skills



# Essential Nutrient: Skills



What would result if transition occurs without people having the necessary skills?

Type a one-word description of the result in the chat box.

# Essential Nutrient: Skills



If people feel unprepared to do the work, even with great vision they will feel anxious about failing and this will affect buy-in.



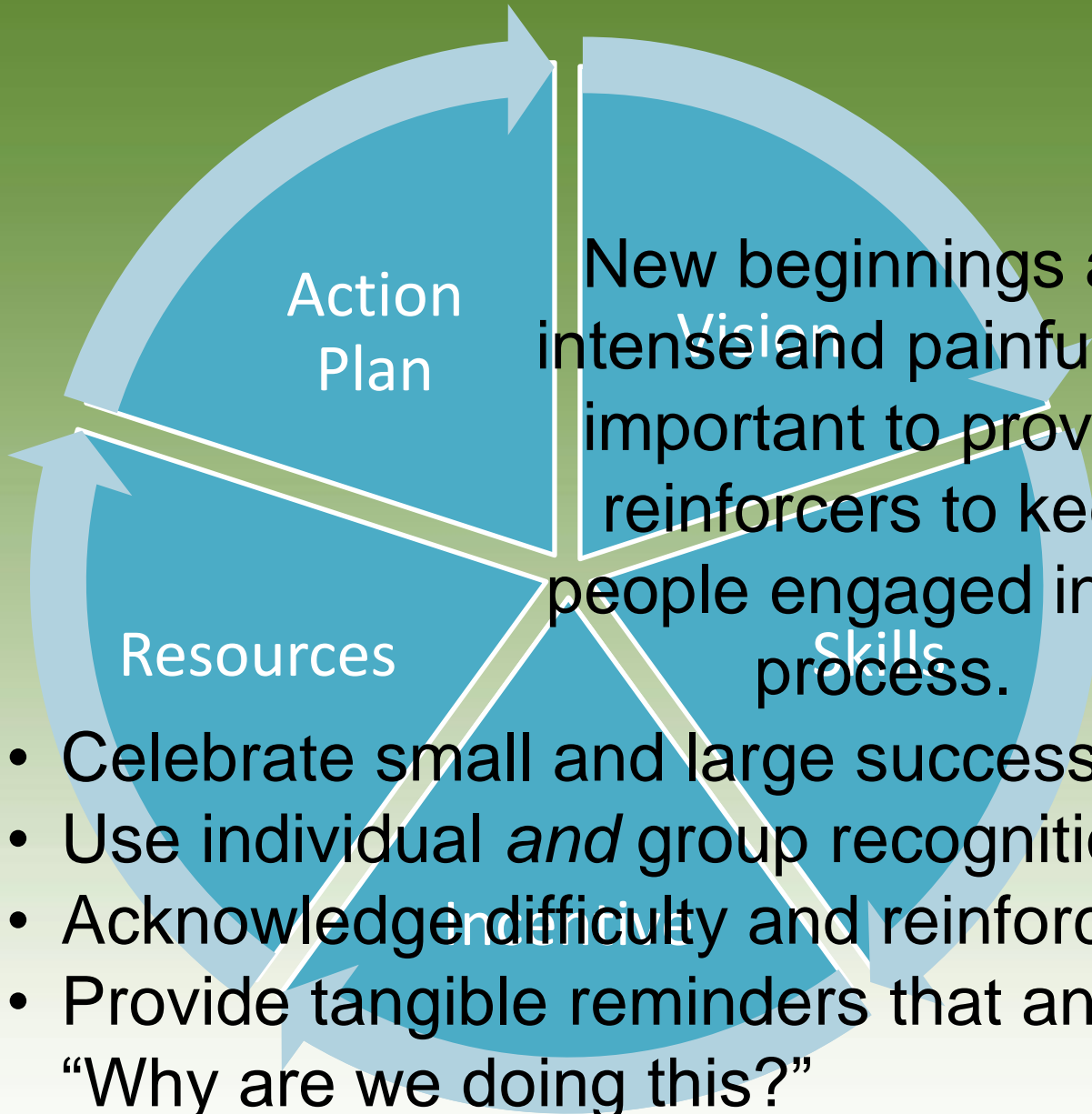
# Essential Nutrient: Skills



Where do you see anxiety among those you lead?

Are there ways to invest in skill development to help with this?

# Essential Nutrient: Incentive



- Celebrate small and large successes.
- Use individual *and* group recognition.
- Acknowledge difficulty and reinforce effort.
- Provide tangible reminders that answer, “Why are we doing this?”

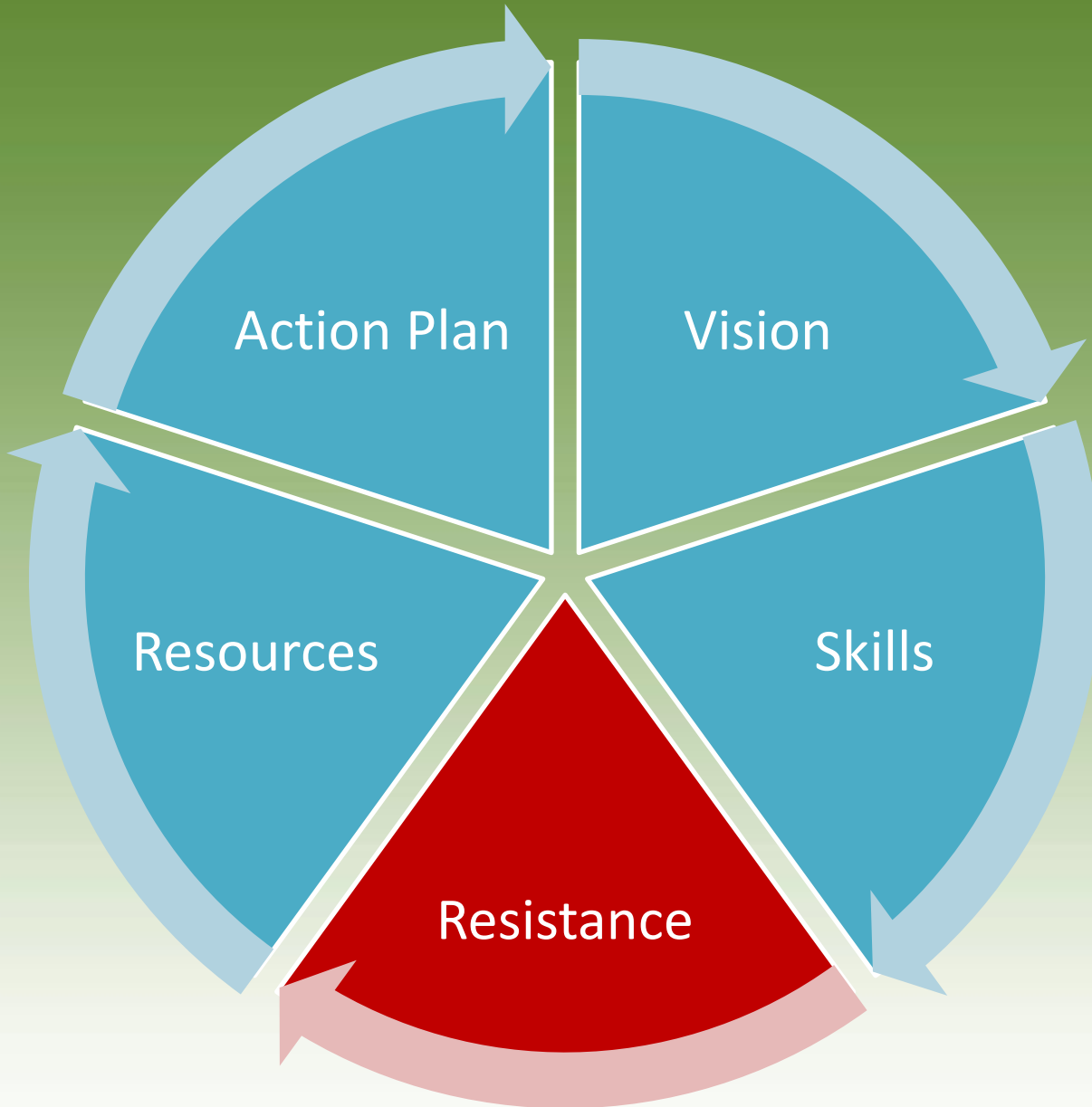
# Essential Nutrient: Incentive



What would result if transition occurs without incentives for people?

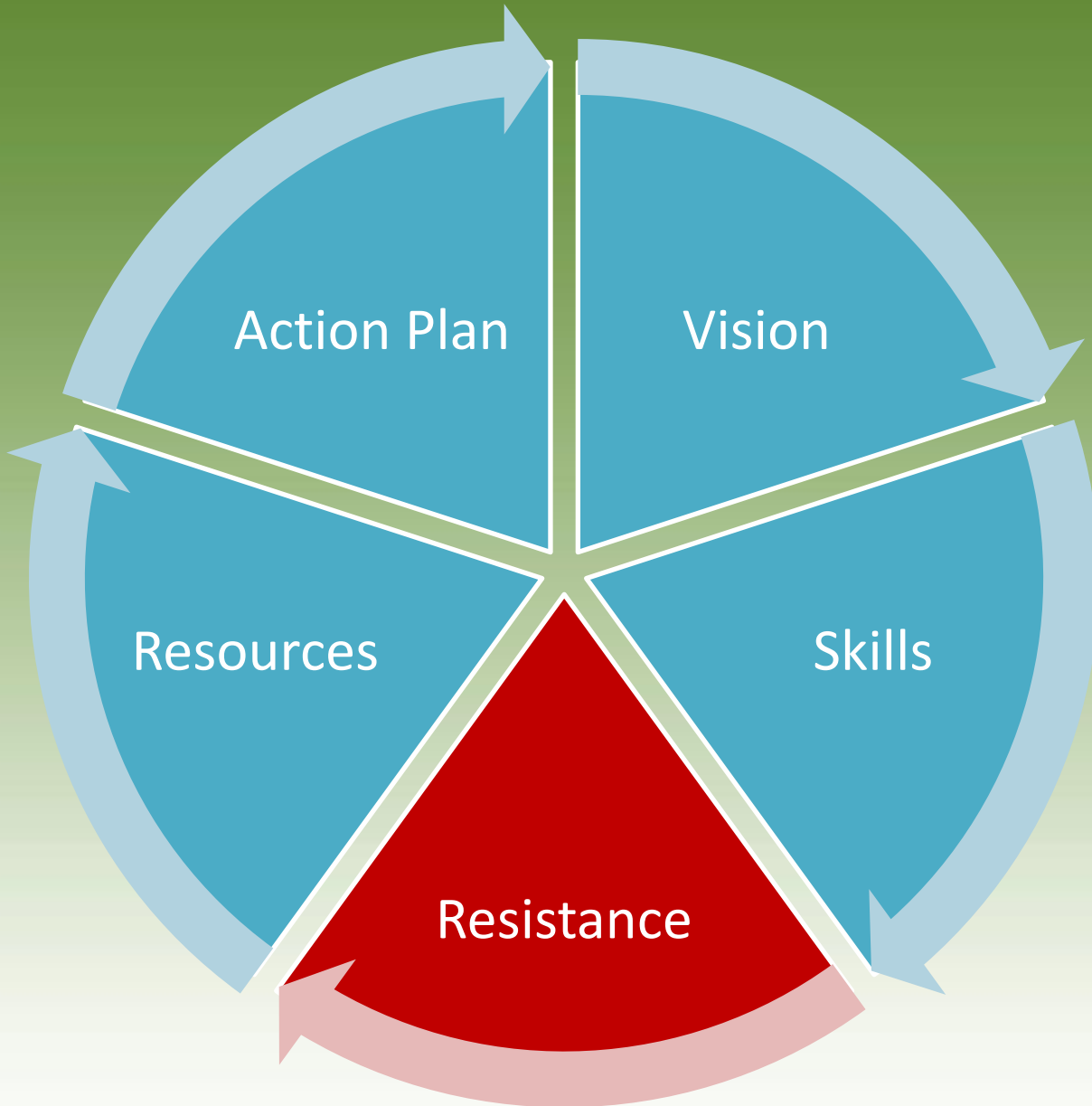
Type a one-word description of the result in the chat box.

# Essential Nutrient: Incentive



When you omit things that keep individuals engaged, new beginnings are slow and marked by a high degree of resistance.

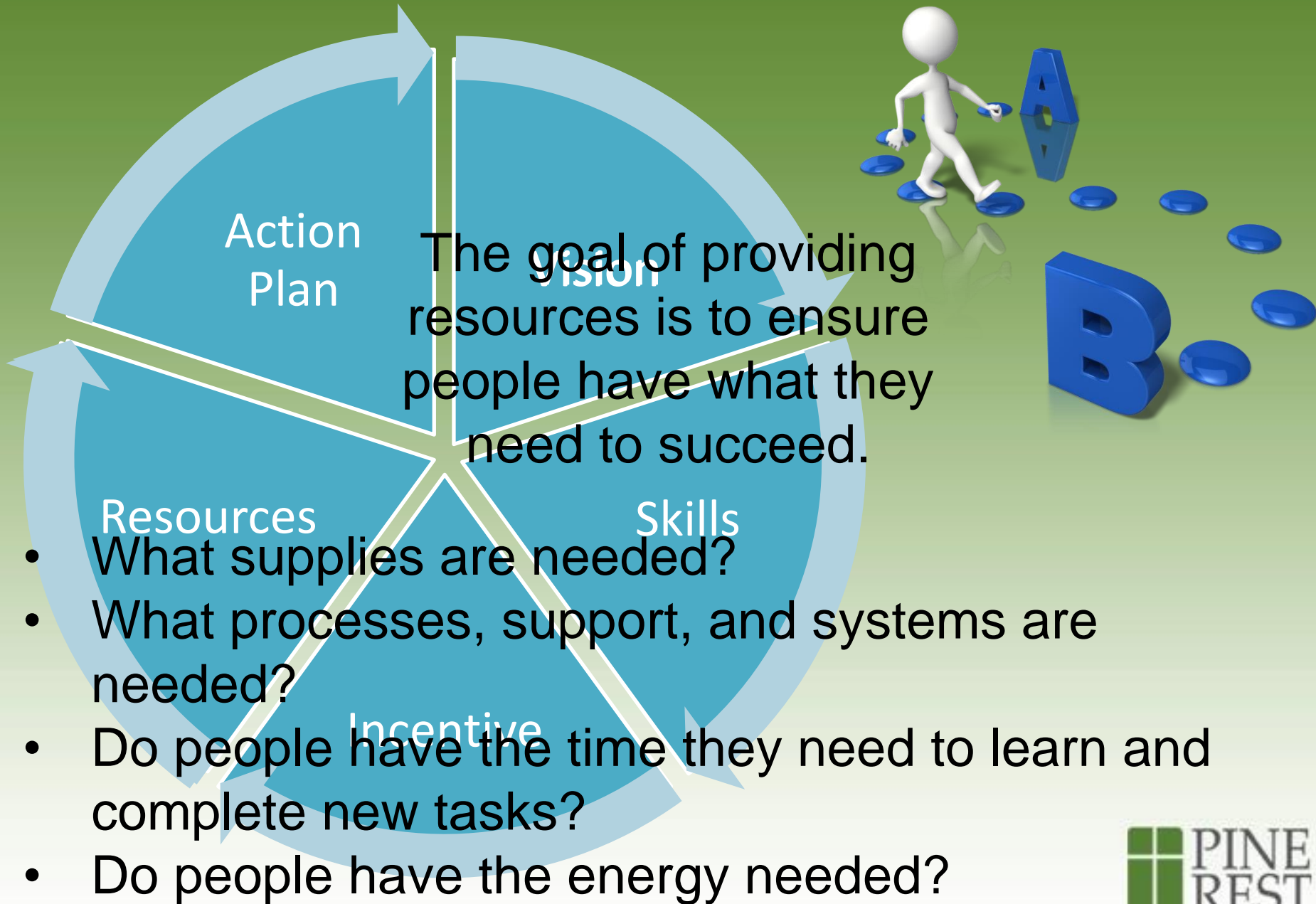
# Essential Nutrient: Incentive



Are you experiencing resistance from those you lead?

What incentives might help with this?

# Essential Nutrient: Resources



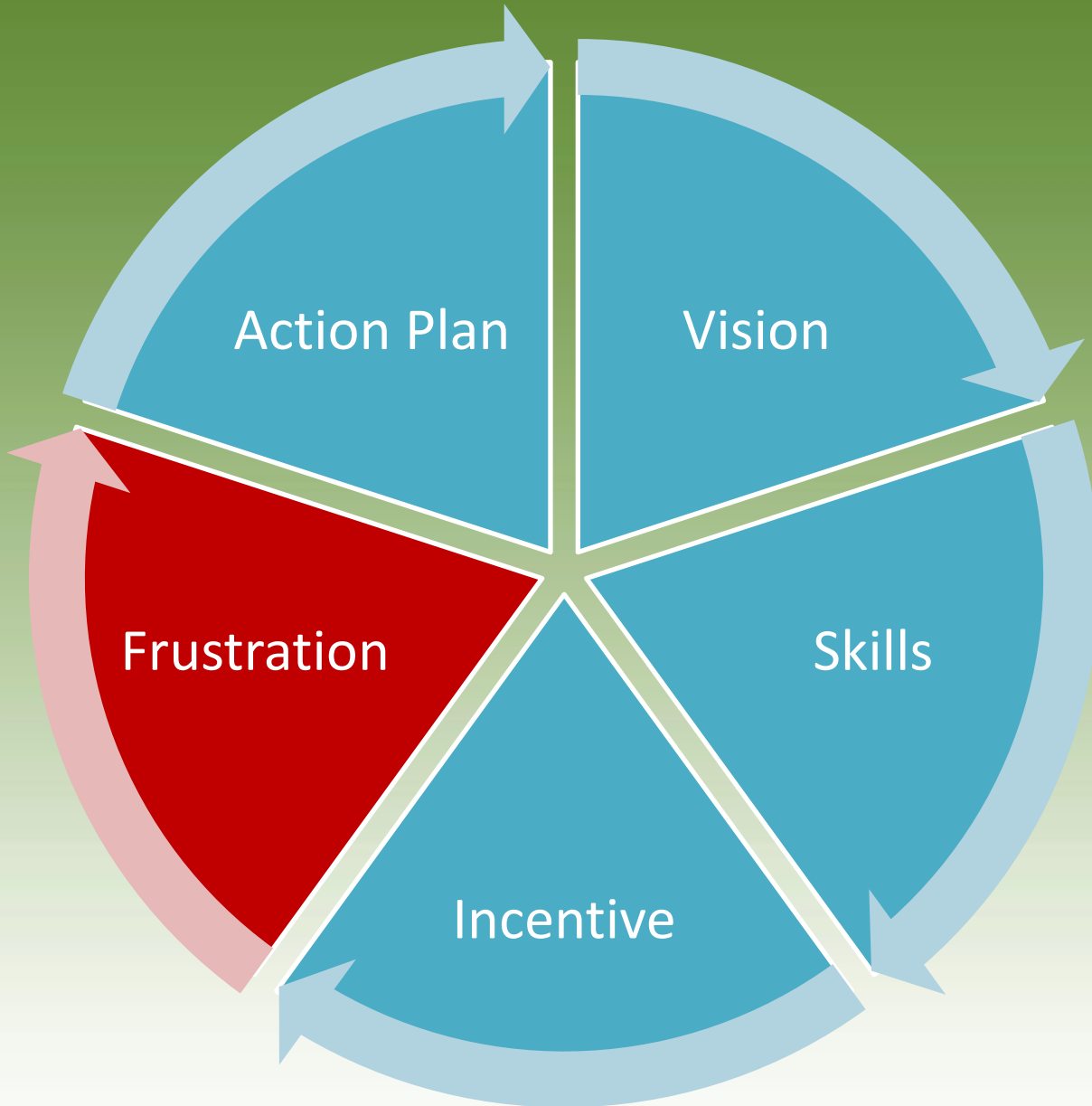
# Essential Nutrient: Resources



What would result if transition occurs without sufficient resources?

Type a one-word description of the result in the chat box.

# Essential Nutrient: Resources

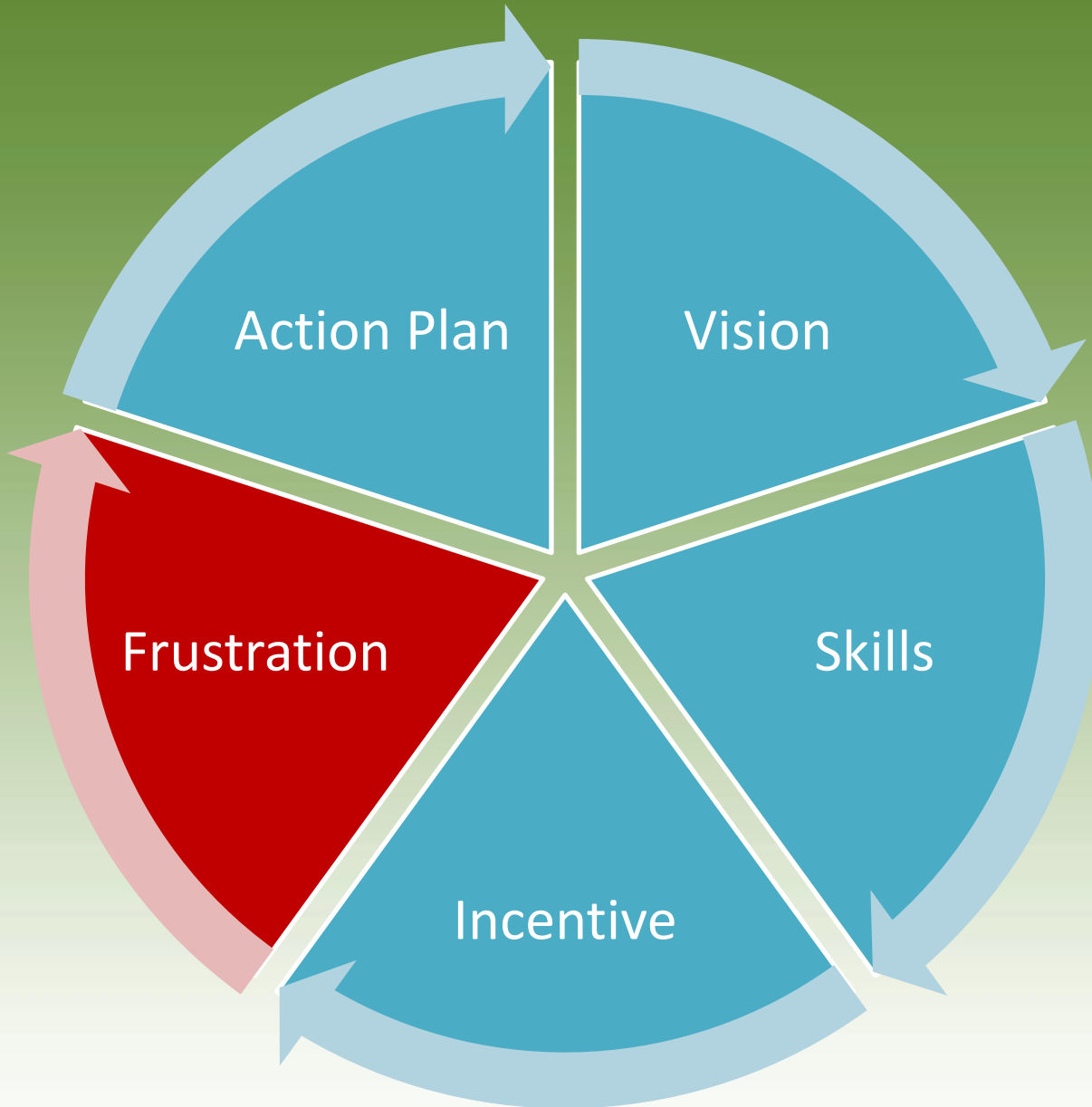


Lack of even a single resource creates intense frustration.

People have a vision and the skills to accomplish it but lack resources to get the job done.



# Essential Nutrient: Resources



Where do you see frustration among those you lead?

What resources do people need to alleviate this?

# Essential Nutrient: Action Plan



People need a clear understanding of the plan and how their part is essential to the plan's success.

Action Plan

Vision

Resources Skills

Incentive

- What is going to happen?
- When will it happen?
- Why is it important?
- What is each individual's role and what are they doing in that role?
- Why is each individual role essential to success?

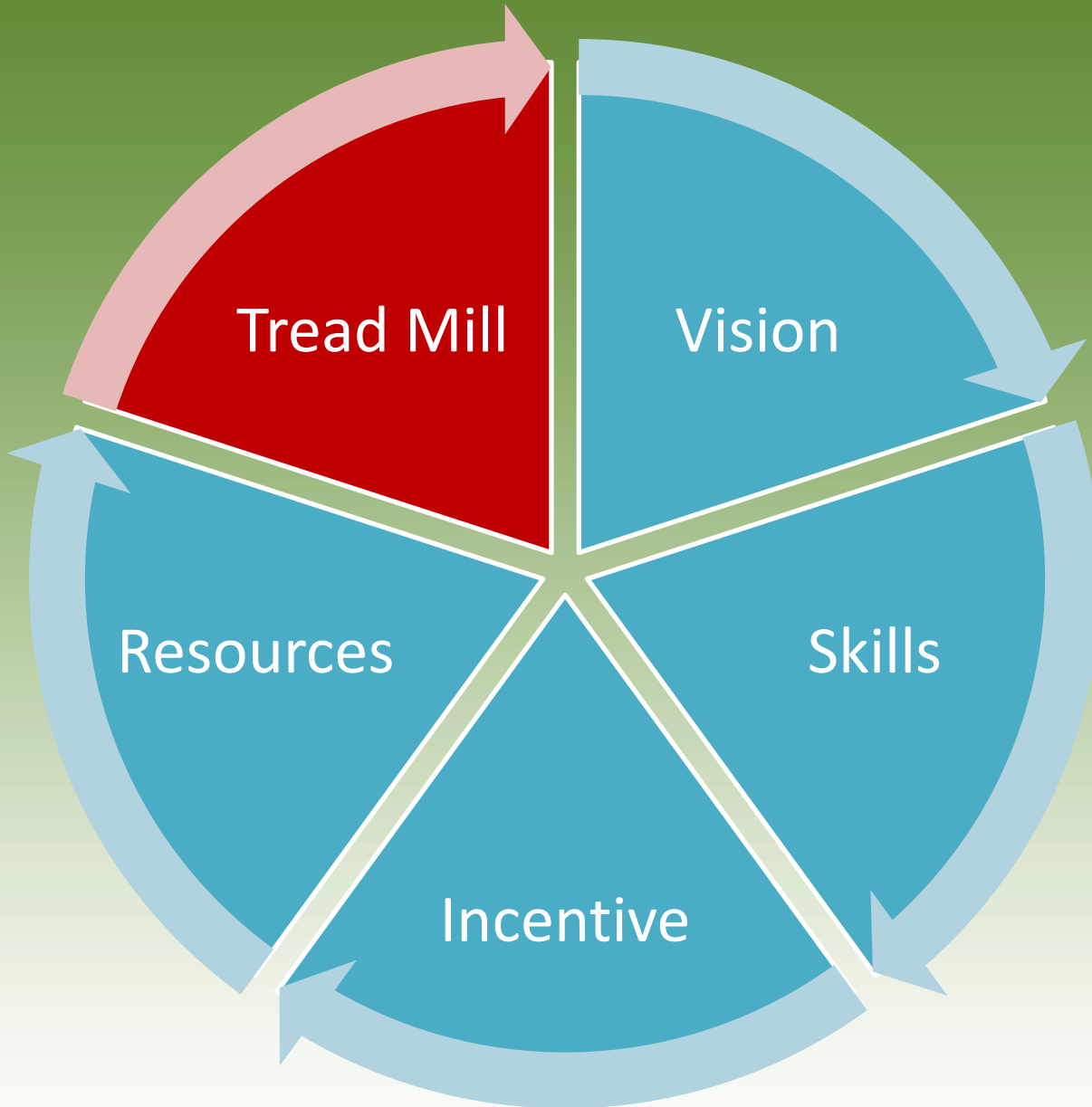
# Essential Nutrient: Action Plan



What would result if transition occurs without an action plan?

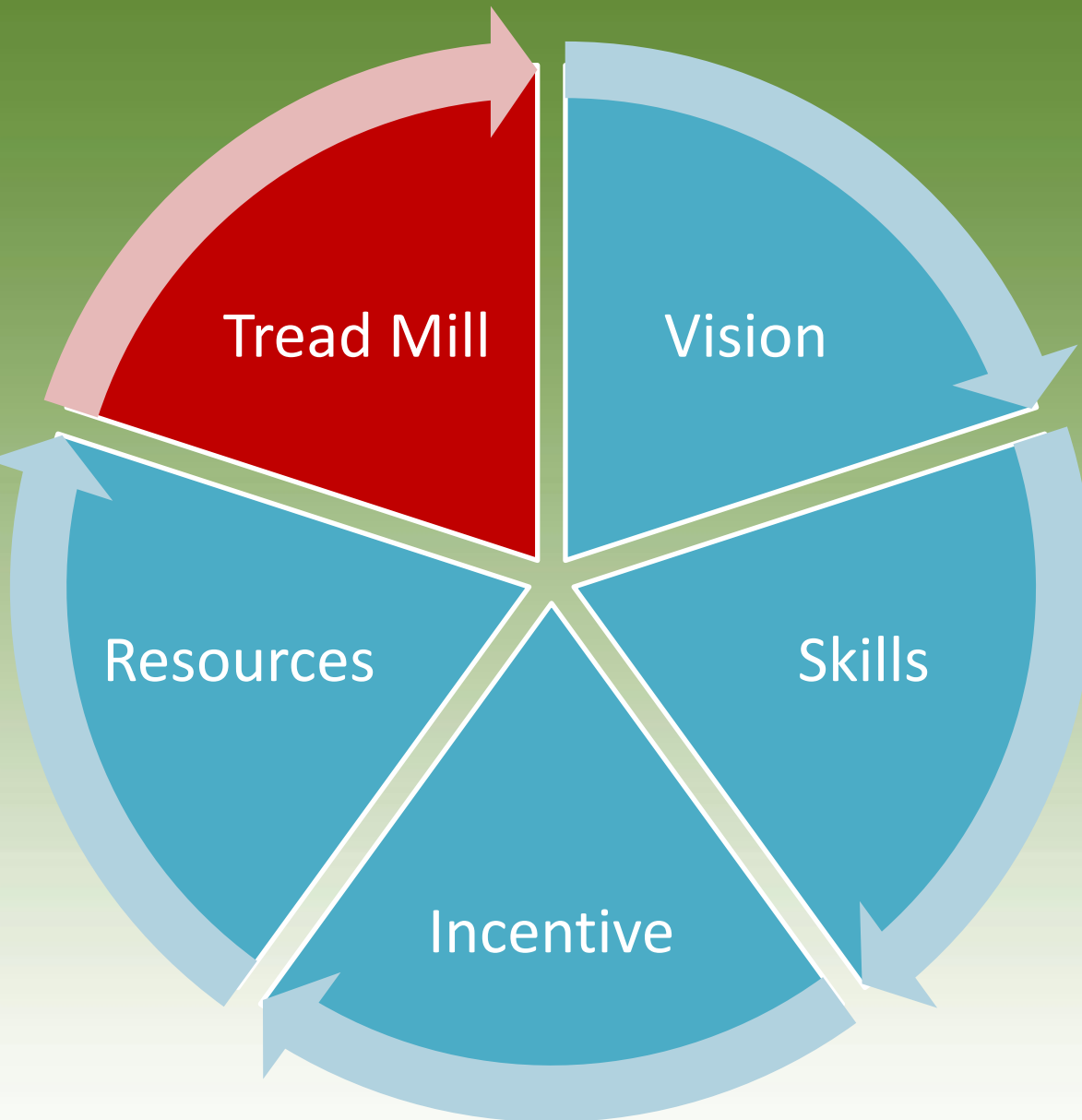
Type a one-word description of the result in the chat box

# Essential Nutrient: Action Plan



Without a plan broken down into actionable steps, organizations end up on a “treadmill.” They run without moving ahead.

# Essential Nutrient: Action Plan



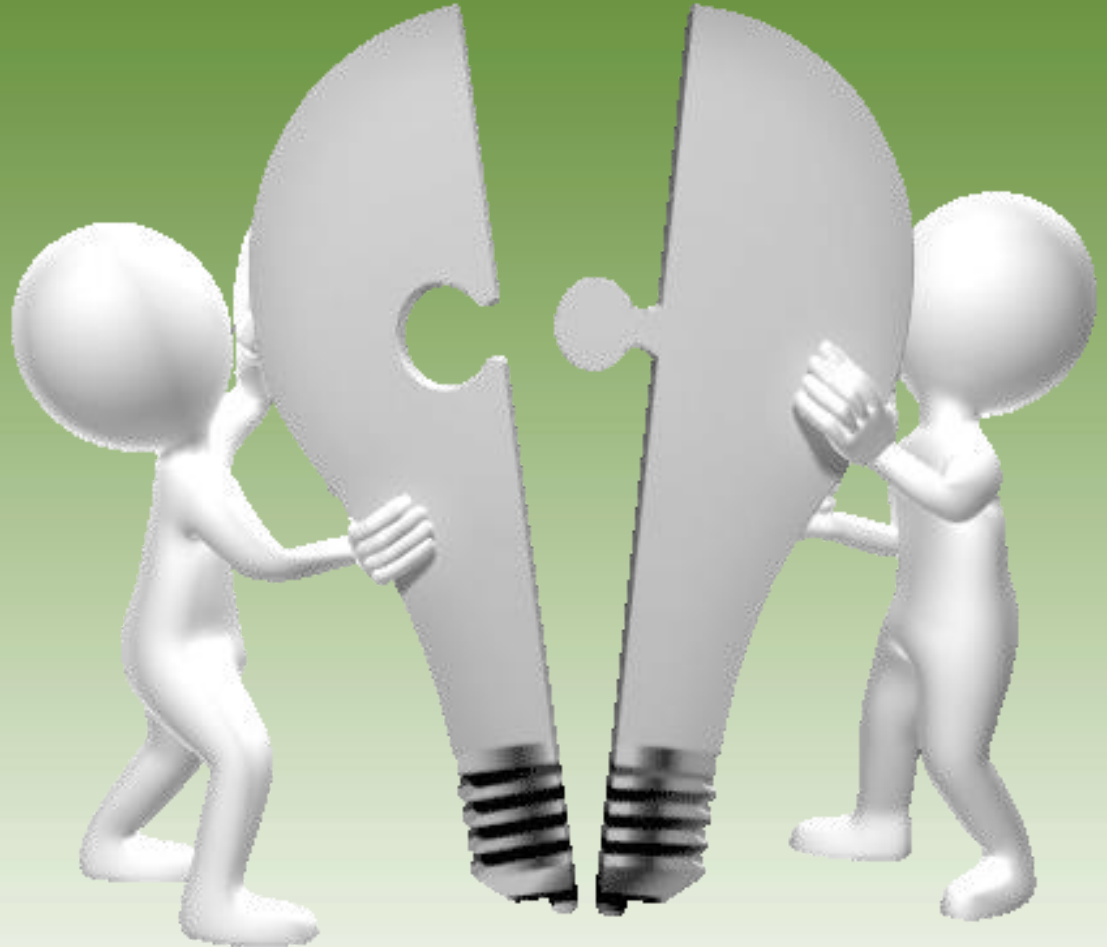
Where do those you lead seem to be running and not getting anywhere?

What sort of action plan might help with this?

# Take Away

**One New  
Idea**

**One Action  
Step To  
Implement**



# All Content Adapted From:

Bridges, William, *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change* (Philadelphia: DaCapo Press, 2009)

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Kotter, John P. *Leading Change* (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1996)

# Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Services

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